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THE HAUNTED MAN!

A Dramatization, in Three Acts,

OF

CHAS. DICKENS' CHRISTMAS STORY

OF THE SAME TITLE,

By CHARLES A. SCOTT.



NEWARK, N. J.:

NEW JERSEY SOLDIERS' HOME PRINT.

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hearsal, to enable the owner to make such alterations as may seem
judicious.

CHARACTERS.

Richard Redlaw, a Professor of Chemistry.....	
The Phantom of Redlaw.....	
James Longford, a former friend of Redlaw.....	
Edward Longford, a student, and son of James Longford.....	
Philip Swidgers, aged 87.....	
William Swidger , George Swidgers, Sons of Philip.....	
Adolphus Tetterby, a newsdealer.....	
Adolphus Tetterby, Jr., a newsboy.....	
Johnny Tetterby, Moloch's victim.....	
Three Tetterby children.....	
The Waif, a street gamin.....	
Mrs. William Swidgers.....	
Mrs. Sophia Tetterby.....	
Alice Wentworth.....	

COSTUMES.

Redlaw. Black or brown suit; long square tailed cut-away coat, long vest, black neckerchief, long black hair, tinged with grey-grizzled; hollow cheeks; age 50; low-crowned hat.

Phantom. Same as Redlaw.

James Longford. A seedy suit of black, coat buttoned up to chin; iron grey wig, short hair, battered hat, dissipated appearance; age 50.

Edmund Longford. Morning gown. Walking suit.

Philip Scidgers. Old-fashioned doublet, light blue; brown trousers; great coat, leggings and low crowned hat for out doors; cotton shirt, bald wig, long thin white hair; age 87.

William Scidgers. Fly-away coat, red waistcoat, grey trousers, white scarf; drab box coat, and low crowned hat for out doors; short light hair, on end all over; age 35.

George Scidgers. Rough suit, worse for wear; shaggy beard under chin; sandy hair, unkempt; slouch hat; age 45.

Tetterby. Striped woolen trousers, black waistcoat shirt, no coat or collar, black neckerchief; iron grey wig, short hair, smooth face; age 50.

Adolphus and Johnny. Boys' ill fitting suits, ragged and torn, and Johnny's trousers too short; cap and comforter for Adolphus.

Children. Coarse night slips and ragged suits.

The Waif. Boy's ragged suit; shock wig; dirty face.

Mrs. William. Red and white flowered skirt; black bodice, white apron, a trim, tidy cap; bonnet and woolen shawl for out doors; age 25.

Mrs. Tetterby. A house dress of common material; bonnet and shawl; age 45. Should be a large woman.

Alice. Traveling suit.

FURNITURE AND PROPERTIES.

ACT I.

SCENE 1. Four leather-bottomed chairs, high-backed, antique pattern; table, c., retorts and crucibles; jars of chemicals, measures, books, &c., &c., displayed. Globe lamp on table; dinner tray, caster, two plates, knife and fork; three table spoons, three tea spoons, salt cellar, tumbler, decanter of water, bread, napkins, butter. Tray with roast fowl, mashed potatoes, gravy-boat for Milly to enter with. Holly and evergreens, with red berries, for Philip to enter with. Purse for Redlaw.

ACT II.

SCENE 1. Table, c., four common chairs; buffet with crockery, L. U. E. Newspaper screen before door, L. 2. Trundle bed, R. U. E. Stairway, R. 3 E. Oyster shells for boys at R. 2 E. Stool for Johnny, R. Cradle, L. 3 E. Market basket with peas-pudding wrapped in paper, and knuckle of roast leg of pork with gravy and cracklings, in a large covered dish or basin, bread for Mrs. Tetterby to enter with. Pitcher of water and glass on buffet.

SCENE 2. No properties.

SCENE 3. Couch at L. 2 E; small table near head of couch; two common chairs. Cook for Edmund. Purse for Redlaw to enter with. Work basket and muslin for Milly to enter with.

SCENE 4. Trundle bed, R. 3 E.; small stand at head of bed; lighted candle on bed.

ACT III.

SCENE 1. Canze for centre door of fl t. Table and chair, R. c.

SCENE 2. Same as Scene 1, Act II. Baby in cradle.

SCENE 3. No properties.

SCENE 4. Set fire L. 2 E. Easy chair for Philip. Table, c. Four chairs and sofa. Clothing convenient for Milly to put on boy.

THE HAUNTED MAN.

Act. I.

THE GIFT BESTOWED.

SCENE I.—*Mr. Redlaw's chamber, 4 G. boxed; part library and part laboratory. Doors, c. Old fashioned fire-place, L. Table, c. Three or four leather bottomed chairs, antique pattern; globe lamp on table. Lights down at rise of curtain. Mr. Redlaw discovered seated at R. of table, apparently buried in thought. Knock, L. C. D.*

Redlaw. Who's that? Come in.

Enter Wm. Swidgers, L., with dinner tray, carefully opening and closing the door, to prevent noise.

William. I'm humbly fearful, sir, that it's a good bit past the time to-night. But Mrs. William has been taken off her legs so often—

Red. By the wind? Ay! I have heard it rising.

Wm. (*Puts tray down, lights the lamp—lights up—and spreads the cloth.*) By the wind, sir. That it's a mercy she got home at all. O dear, yes. Yes. It was, by the wind, Mr. Redlaw. By the wind. Mrs. William is of course subject at any time, sir, to be taken off her balance by the elements. She is not formed superior to that.

Red. No. (*Abruptly, but good-naturedly.*)

Wm. No, sir. Mrs. William may be taken off her balance by Earth; by Air; by Fire; by Water. Yes, sir. Mrs. William must be taken out of the elements, for the strength of *her* character to come into play.

Red. Yes. (*In same tone as before*)

Wm. Yes, sir. Oh dear, yes! (*Preparing table and checking the articles as he arranges them.*) That's where it is, sir. That's what I always say myself, sir. Such a many of us Swidgers!—*Pepper.* Why, there's my father, sir, superannuated keeper and custodian of this Institution, eighty-seven years old. He's a Swidger!—*Spoon.*

Red. True, William (*Abstractedly*)

Wm. Yes, sir. That's what I always say, sir. You may call him the trunk of the tree.—*Bread.* Then you come to his successor, my unworthy self—*salt*—and Mrs. William Swidgers both.—*Knife and fork.* Then you come to all my bothers and their families, Swidgers, man and woman, boy and girl. Why, what with cousins, uncles, aunts, and relationship with this, that and t'other degree, and what not degree; and marriages and lyings-in, the Swidgers—*tumbler*—might take hold of hands and make a ring around England! (*Redlaw, engrossed in thought, making no reply, William makes a feint of accidentally knocking the table with a decanter, and succeeding in rousing him, resumes.*) Yes, sir! That's just what I say myself, sir. Mrs. William and me have often said so. There's Swidgers enough, we say, without our voluntary contributions.—*Butter.* In fact, sir, my father is a family in himself—*easter*—to take care of; and it happens all for the best that we have no child of our own, though it's made Mrs. William rather quiet-like, too. Quite ready for the fowl and mashed potatoes, sir? Mrs. William said she'd dish in ten minutes, when I left the Lodge.

Red. I am quite ready. (*Rousing himself as if from a dream, and walking to and fro.*)

Wm. (*Warming a plate at the fire, and shading his face with it.*) Mrs. William has been at it again, sir!

(*Redlaw stops walking, and appears interested.*) What I always say myself, sir. She *will* do it! There's a motherly feeling in Mrs. William's breast that must and will have went.

Red. What has she done?

Wm. Why, sir, not satisfied with being a sort of mother to all the young gentlemen that come up from a variety of parts, to attend to your courses of lectures at this ancient foundation—it's surprising how stone-chancy catches the heat this frosty weather, to be sure! (*Turning the plate quickly, and cooling his fingers.*)

Red. Well?

Wm. That's just what I say myself, sir, (*speaking over his shoulder in delighted assent.*) That's exact y where it is. There ain't one of our students but appears to regard Mrs. William in that light. Every day, they puts their heads into the lodge one after another, and have all got something to tell her, or something to ask her. Swidge is the appellation in general by which they speak of Mrs. William among themselves; but that's what I say, sir. Better be called ever so far out of your name, if it's done in real liking, than have it made ever so much of, and not cared about. What's a name 'or? To know a person by. If Mrs. William is known by something better than her name—I allude to Mrs. William's qualities and disposition—never mind her name, though it *is* Swidger, by rights. Let 'em call her Swidge, Widge, Bridge, London Bridge, Backfins, or any other bridge, if they like! (*Business with plate, which he brings to the table, and half drops it, with a lively sense of its being heated.*)

Enter Milly with tray, door in flat, followed by Old Philip with holly in his arms. Mr. Redlaw takes seat at R. of table, with his elbows resting upon it, and his left hand to his forehead. William goes to the door and relieves Milly of the tray.

Wm. Punctual, of course, Milly, or it wouldn't be you. Here's Mrs. William, sir!—He looks lonelier than ever to-night, and ghostlier altogether. (*Aside to Milly as he takes the tray. All come down. Milly sets things on table quietly; William bustles about with gravy-boat; Philip advances to L. c. in front of table.*)

Red. What is that the old man has in his arms?

Milly. Holly, sir.

Wm. That's what I say myself, sir. Berries is so seasonable to the time of year.—Brown gravy.

Red. Another Christmas come, another year gone! More figures in the lengthening sum of recollection that we work and work at, to our torment, till death idly jumbles all together, and rubs all out. (*Raising his voice. Milly takes holly from the old man, and begins to decorate the room.*) So, Philip!

Phil. My duty to you, sir. Should have spoken before, sir, but know your ways, Mr. Redlaw—proud to say—and wait till spoke to! Merry Christmas, sir, and Happy New Year, and many of 'em. Have had a pretty many of 'em myself—ha, ha!—and may take the liberty of wishing 'em. I'm eighty-seven!

Red. Have you had so many that were merry and happy?

Phil. Ay, sir, ever so many.

Red. (to Wm.) Is his memory impaired with age? It is to be expected now.

Wm. Not a morsel of it, sir. That's exactly what I say myself, sir. There never was such a memory as my father's. He's the most wonderful man in the world. He don't know what forgetting means. It's the very observation I'm always making to Mrs. William, sir, if you'd believe me.

(*Philip has crossed to L. and is looking at a sprig of holly. Redlaw pushes his plate away, rises, and crosses*

to Philip, touching him upon the shoulder.)

Red. It recalls the time when many of those years were old and new, then? Does it?

Phil. Oh, many, many. I'm eighty-seven.

Red. (*In a low voice.*) Merry and happy, was it? Merry and happy, old man?

Phil. May be as high as that, no higher (*holding his hand out a little above the level of his knee*), when I first remember 'em. Cold, sunshiny day it was, out a-walk-ing, when some one—it was my mother as sure as you you stand there, though I don't know what her blessed face was like, for she took ill and died that Christmas-time—told me they were food for birds. (*Refers to the berries.*) The pretty little boy thought—that's me, you understand—that bird's eyes were so bright, perhaps, because the berries they lived on in the winter were so bright. I recollect that. And I am eighty-seven!

Red. (*Musing.*) Merry and happy! Merry and happy—and remember well!

Phil. Ay, ay, ay! I remember 'em well in my school time, year after year, and all the merry making that used to come along with them. I was a strong chap then, Mr. Redlaw; and if you'll believe me, hadn't my match at foot-ball within ten mile. Where's my son, William? Hadn't my match at foot-ball, William, within ten mile.

Wm. That's what I always say, father! You *are* a Swidger, if ever there was one in the family!

Phil. When my circumstances got to be not so good as formerly, through not being honestly dealt by, and I first come here to be custodian, which was upward of 50 years ago—where's my son William? More than half a century ago, William!

Wm. That's what I say, father; that's exactly where it is. Two times ought's and cught, and twice five ten, and there's a hundred of 'em.

Phil. It was quite a pleasure to know that one of our founders, that he'ped to endow us in Queen Elizabeth's time, left in his will, among other bequests he made us, so much to buy holly, for garnishing the walls and windows, come Christmas. There was something homely and friendly in it. Being but strange here, then, and coming at Christmas-time, we took a liking for his very pieter, that hangs in what used to be, ancient y, our great Dinner Hall.—A sedate gentleman, in a peaked beard, with a ruff around his neck, and a scroll below him, in old English letters, "Lord! keep my memory green!" You know all about him, Mr. Redlaw?

Red. I know the portrait hangs there, Philip.

Philip. Yes, sure, it's the second on the right, above the panneling. I was goimg to say—he has he'ped to keep *my* memory green, I thank him; for, going round the building every year, as I'm a-doing now, and freshering up the bare rooms with the branches, the bright berries freshens up my bare old brain. One year brings back another, and that year another, and these others, numbers! At las', it seems to me as if the birth-time of our Lord was the birth-time of all I have ever had affection for, or mourned for, or delighted in; and they are pretty many, for I'm eighty-seven.

Red. Merry and happy. (*Abstractedly.*)

Phil. So you see, sir, I have plenty to keep when I keep this season. Now, where's my quiet mouse? Chattering's the sin of my time of life, and there's half the building to do yet, if the cold don't freeze us, or the wind don't blow us away, or the darkness don't swallow us up. (*Milly joins him, and they start to go out.*) Come away, my dear. Mr. Redlaw won't settle to his dinner, otherwise, til it's cold as winter. I hope you'll excuse me rambling on, sir, and I wish you good night, and, once again, a merry—

Red. Stay. (*Resumes seat at table.*) Spare me another moment, Philip. William, you were going to tell me something to your excellent wife's honor. It will not be disagreeable to her to hear you praise her. What was it?

Wm. Why, that's where it is, you see, sir. Mrs. William has got her eye upon me.

Red. But you are not afraid of Mrs. William's eye?

Wm. Why, no, sir; that's what I say myself. It wasn't made to be afraid of. It wouldn't have been made so mild if that was the intention. But I wouldn't like to—Milly—him you know. Down in the buildings. Tell him, my dear! You're the works of Shakspear in comparison with myself. Down in the buildings, you know, my love—Student.

Red. Student?

Wm. That's what I say, sir? If it wasn't the poor student down in the buildings, why should you wish to hear it from Mrs. William's lips? Mrs. William, my dear—Buildings

Milly. I didn't know that William had said anything about it, or I wouldn't have come. I asked him not to. It's a sick young gentleman, sir—and very poor, I am afraid—who is too ill to go home this holiday-time, and lives, unknown to any one, down in Jerusalem buildings. That's all, sir.

Red. (*Rising hurriedly.*) Why have I never heard of him? Why has he not made his situation known to me? Sick! Give me my hat and cloak! Poor!—what house, what number?

Milly. Oh, you musn't go there, sir. (*Confronting him.*)

Red. Not go there? What do you mean?

Wm. Why you see, sir, that's what I say. Depend upon it, the young gentleman would never have made his

situation known to one of his own sex. Mrs. William has got into his confidence. They all confide in Mrs. William; they all trust HER. A man, sir, couldn't have got a whisper out of him; but woman, sir, and Mrs. William combined—!

Red. There's good sense and delicacy in what you say, William. (*Secretly puts purse into Milly's hand.*)

Milly. Oh dear, no sir. (*Gives purse back.*) He said that of all the world, he would not be known to you, or receive help from you—though he is a student in your class.

Red. Why did he say so.

Milly. Indeed I can't tell, sir. But I know he is poor and lonely, and I think he is somehow neglected, too. (*Stage gradually darkened.*) How dark it is.

Red. What more about him?

Milly. He is engaged to be married when he can afford it, and is studying, I think, to qualify himself to earn a living.—How very dark it is.

Phil. It's turned colder, too. There's a chill and dismal feeling in the room. Where's my son William? William, my boy, turn the lamp and rouse the fire!

Milly. (*Resuming, as if to herself.*) He muttered in his broken sleep yesterday afternoon, after talking to me about some one dead, and some great wrong done that could never be forgotten, but whether to him or to another person I don't know. Not *by* him, I am sure.

Wm. And, in short, Mrs. William, you see—which she wouldn't say herself, Mr. Redlaw, if she was to stop here till the new year after this next one, has done him world's of good! Bless you, worlds of good! All at home just as snug and comfortable as ever—yet Mrs. William backward and forward, backward and forward, up and down, up and down, a mother to him. Not content with this, sir, Mrs. William goes and finds, this very

night, when she was coming home, a creature more like a wild beast than a young child, shivering on a doorstep. What does Mrs. William do, but brings it home to dry it and feed it. If it ever felt the fire before, it's as much as it ever did; for it's setting in the old Lodge chimney, staring at curs as if its ravenous eyes would never shut again. It's sitting there, at least, unless it's bolted.

Red. Heaven keep her happy! And you, too, Philip! and you, William! I must consider what to do in this. I may desire to see this student; I'll not detain you longer now. Good night!

Phil. I thank 'ee, sir; I thank 'ee, for mouse, and for my son William, and for myself. Where's my son William? William, you take the lantern and go on first, through them long, dark passages, as you did last year and the year afore. Ha, ha! I remember—though I'm eighty-seven! Lord keep my memory green! It's a very good prayer, Mr. Redlaw, that of the learned gentleman in the peaked beard, with a ruff round his neck—hangs up second on the right of the paneling, in what used to be, afore our ten poor gentlemen commuted, our great Dinner Hall. Lord keep my memory green! It's very good and pious, sir. Amen! Amen! (*Exeunt Wm., Milly and Philip, door in flat.*)

[*Previous to the exit, the Phantom enters from trap in rear of the table, and is concealed from view by the table cloth. Redlaw seated in high-backed chair at R. of table, apparently musing. Soft Christmas music in distance. Lights down. Phantom gradually rises to view behind chair-back. As Redlaw leans his arm upon the elbow of his chair, the Phantom gradually leans his arm upon the back of the chair, in the same manner and at the same time; both look in the same direction; have the same expression, as near as possible, and seem to listen to the music until it ceases.*]

Red. (*Without moving.*) Here again?

Phantom. (*Without moving.*) Here again!

Red. I see you in the fire; I hear you in music, in the wind, in the dead stillness of the night. (*Phantom moves its head in assent.*) Why do you come to haunt me thus?

Phant. I come as I am called.

Red. No. Unbidden.

Phant. Unbidden be it. It is enough. I am here. (*Advances quickly to the right and front as Redlaw turns in his chair; both stare at each other.*) Look upon me! I am he, neglected in my youth, and miserably poor, who strove and suffered, and still strove and suffered, until I hewed out knowledge from the mine where it was buried, and made rugged steps thereof, for my worn feet to rest and rise on.

Red. I am that man.

Phant. No mother's self-denying love, no father's counsel aided me. A stranger came into my father's place when I was but a child, and I was easily an alien from my mother's heart. In the struggle upward I found a friend. All the love and confidence that in my earlier youth had had no outlet, and found no expression, I bestowed on him.

Red. Not all.

Phant. No, not all. I had a sister.

Red. I had. (*Head resting on hands.*)

Phant. (*Advancing to chair, and resting his hand upon back, with eyes fixed on Redlaw.*) How young she was, how fair, how loving! I took her to the first poor roof that I was master of, and made it rich. She came into the darkness of my life, and made it bright.—She is before me!

Red. I saw her in the fire, but now. I hear her in music, in the wind, in the dead stillness of the night.

Phant. Did he love her? I think he did once. Better had she loved him less—less secretly, less dearly, from the shallower depths of a more divided heart!

Red. (*With energy, and an angry motion of the hand.*) Let me forget it. Let me blot it from my memory!

Phant. A dream like hers stole upon my own life.

Red. It did.

Phant. A love as like hers, as my inferior nature might cherish, arose in my own heart. I was too poor to bind its object to my fortune then by any thread of promise or entreaty. I loved her far too well to seek to do it. But, more than ever I had striven in my life, I strove to climb. I toiled up, nearer to the height, and when day was breaking, what pictures of the future did I see!

Red. I saw them in the fire, but now. They came back to me in music, in the wind, in the dead stillness of the night, in the revolving years.

Phant. Pictures of my domestic life in the future, with her who was the inspiration of my toil. Pictures of my sister, made the wife of my friend on equal terms; pictures of our sobered age, and mellowed happiness, and of the golden links that should bind us and our children in a radiant garland.

Red. Pictures that were delusions. Why is it my doom to remember them so well?

Phant. Delusions. For my friend passing between me and the centre of the system of my hopes and struggles, won her to himself, and shattered my frail universe. My sister, doubly dear, doubly devoted, lived on to see me famous, and my old ambition so rewarded, when its spring was broken, and then——.

Red. Then died. Died, gentle as ever happy, and with no concern but for her brother. Peace! (*Pause.*) Remembered! Yes. So well remembered, that even

now, when years have passed, and nothing is more idle or more visionary to me than the boyish love so long outlived. I think of it with sympathy. Sometimes I even wonder if I ever had a place in her heart, and if her affections went with her hand.—But that is nothing. Early unhappiness, a wound from a hand that I loved and trusted, and a loss that nothing can replace, outlive such fancies.

Phant. Thus I bear within me a sorrow and a wrong. Thus I pry upon myself. Thus memory is my curse: and if I could forget my sorrow and my wrong, I would.

Red. Mocker! (*Leaping up, and advancing threateningly toward Phantom, who retreats backward.*) Why have I always that taunt in my ears?

Phant. Fear! (*Both stop. Phantom with arm raised in warning, and figure drawn up in triumph.*) Lay a hand on me and die. (*Pause.*) If I could forget my sorrow and wrong, I would.

Red. (*In trembling tone.*) Evil spirit of myself, my life is darkened by that incessant whisper.

Phant. It is an echo.

Red. If it be an echo of my thoughts—as now, I know it is, why should I therefore be tormented? It is not a selfish thought. I suffer it to range beyond myself. All men and women have their sorrows—most of them their wrongs: in gratitude, and in selfish jealousy and interest besetting all degrees of life. Who would not forget their sorrows and their wrongs?

Phant. Who would not, truly, and be the happier for it?

Red. These revolutions of years, which we commemorate, what do *they* reel? Are there any minutes in which they do not re-waken some sorrow, or some trouble? What is the remembrance of the old man who was here to-night? A tissue of sorrow and trouble.

Phant. But common natures, unenlightened minds and ordinary spirits, do not feel or reason on these things like men of higher cultivation and profounder thought.

Red. Tempter, whose hollow look and voice I dread more than I can express, I hear again an echo of my own mind.

Phant. Receive it as a proof that I am powerful. Hear what I offer! Forget the sorrow, wrong and trouble you have known.

Red. Forget them!

Phant. I have the power to cancel their remembrance—to leave but very faint, confused traces of them, that will die out soon. Say, is it done?

Red. Stay! I tremble with distrust and doubt of you.—I would not deprive myself of any kindly recollection, or any sympathy that is good for me, or others. What shall I lose, if I assent to this? What else will pass from my remembrance?

Phant. No knowledge; no result of study; nothing but the intertangled chain of feelings and associations, each in its turn dependent on, and nourished by, the banished recollections. Those will go.

Red. Are they so many?

Phant. They have been wont to show themselves in the fire, in music, in the wind, in the dead stillness of the night, in the revolving years. (*Mockingly.*) Decide! before the opportunity is lost!

Red. A moment! I call Heaven to witness, that I have never been a hater of my kind—never morose, indifferent, or hard to anything around me. If living here alone, I have made too much of all that was and might have been, and too little of what is, the evil, I believe, has fallen on me, and not on others. But if there were poison in my body, should I not, possessed of antidotes and knowledge how to use them, use them? If there be

poison in my mind, and through this fearful shadow I can cast it out, shall I not cast it out?

Phant. Say, is it done?

Red. *I would forget it if I could!* Have I thought that alone, or has it been the thought of thousands upon thousands, generation after generation? All human memory is fraught with sorrow and trouble. My memory is as the memory of other men, but other men have not this choice. Yes, I close the bargain. Yes! *I WILL* forget my sorrow, wrong and trouble!

Phant. Say, is it done?

Red. It is!

Phant. It is. And take this with you, man whom I here renounce! The gift I have given you shall give again, go where you will. Without recovering yourself the power you have yielded up, you shall henceforth destroy its like in all whom you approach. Your wisdom has discovered that the memory of sorrow, wrong, and trouble is the lot of all mankind, and that mankind would be the happier, in its other memories, without it. Go! be its benefactor! Freed from such remembrance, from this hour, carry involuntarily the blessing of such freedom with you. Its diffusion is inseparable and inalienable from you. Go! Be happy in the good you have won, and in the good you do! (*Disappears quickly through trap. Lights up.*)

Red. Stay! (*Advances and stops.*) It will not! It is gone! (*Appears rooted to the spot, possessed of fear and wonder.*)

Phant. (*Below stage.*) Destroy its like in all whom you approach.

CURTAIN.

Act. II.

THE GIFT DIFFUSED.

SCENE I. *Tetterby's apartments in Jerusalem Buildings. Plain chamber, 4 G. Door, L. 2 E. Screen in front of door, pasted over with scraps of newspapers. Table, C. Trundle bed, R. U. E. Stairway, R. 3 E. Door, R. C. in flat. Fire in chimney, C. in flat. Tetterby discovered seated in front of screen, reading a newspaper. Two small boys scuffling in and out of bed, with an occasional dash at two other small boys, engaged in building an oyster-shell wall at R. 2. E. Johnny Tetterby, with Moloch, tottering across the stage toward s'ool, near R. E. Mr. Tetterby, throwing down paper, rushes toward the boys, who scamper into bed and through door in flat, and pounces down on Johnny and bores his ears. Children sit up in bed and peep through the door.*

Tet. You bad boy! Haven't you any feeling for your poor father, after the fatigues and anxieties of a hard winter's day, since five o'clock in the morning; but must you wither his rest, and corrode his latest intelligence, with *your* wicious tricks? Isn't it enough, sir, that your brother 'Dolphus is toiling and moiling in the fog and cold, and you rolling in the lap of luxury, with a—with a baby, and everything you can wish for; but must you make a wilderness of home, and maniacs of your parents? Must you, Johnny? (*Shaking him.*) Hey? (*Shaking him.*)

Johnny. (*Whispering.*) Oh, fat'er, when I wasn't doing anything. I'm sure, but taking such care of Sally, and getting her to sleep. Oh father!

Tet. I wish my little woman would come home. (*Relenting.*) I only wish my little woman would come home!

I ain't fit to deal with 'em. They make my head go round and get the better of me. Oh, Johnny! Isn't it enough that your dear mother has provided you with that sweet sister? Isn't it enough that you were seven boys before, without a ray of girl, and that your dear mother went through what she *did* go through, on purpose that you might all of you have a little sister, but must you so behave yourself as to make my head swim? (*Embraces Johnny; breaks away and pursues the other children, who escape to the bed and through the door; captures one and pretends to punish him and restores order.*) My little woman herself could hardly have done better! I only wish my little woman had had it to do, I do indeed. (*Resumes his seat at the screen, and reads therefrom.*) It is an undoubted fact that all remarkable men have had remarkable mothers, and have respected them in after-life as their best friends. Think of your own remarkable mother my boys, and know her value while she is still among you. (*Sits cross-legged in his chair, and takes up his newspaper.* Let any body, I don't care who it is, get out of bed again, and astonishment will be the portion of that respected contemporary! Johnny, my child, take care of your only sister, Sally; for she's the brightest gem that ever sparkled on your early brow. Ah, what a gift that baby is to you, Johnny! and how thankful you ought to be! (*Reading from Screen*) 'It is not generally known,' Johnny 'but it is a fact ascertained, by accurate calculations, that the following immense per centage of babies never attain to two years old; that is to say'—

Johnny. Oh, don't, father, please! I can't bear it when I think of Sally.

Fet. Your brother 'Dolphus is late to night, Johnny, and will come home like a lump of ice. What's got your precious mother?

Johnny. Here's mother, and 'Dolphus too, father! I think.

Tet. (Listening) You're right! Yes, that's the foot-step of my little woman, she's coming through the shop.

Enter Mrs. Tetterby and Master Adolphus. L. 3 E.

Mrs. T. puts her market basket on table; throws her bonnet and shawl back, and seats herself fatigued in chair at table. Adolphus unwinds a colored comforter from his neck, and hangs it on the wall and takes seat near R. 2. E

Mrs. T. Johnny! Bring that precious jewel to me, for a kiss. (*Johnny totters with Moloch from his stool to his mother, and back again.*)

Dolph. Johnny! I must kiss my dear little sister. (*Johnny as before.*)

Tet. Johnny, my child, bestow the same favor on your father. (*Johnny as before.*)

Mrs. T. (shaking her head.) Whatever you do, Johnny, take care of her, or never look your mother in the face again.

Dolph. Nor your brother?

Tet. Nor your father, Johnny. Are you wet, 'Dolphus, my boy? Come and take my chair, and dry your self.

Dolph. No, father, thankee. I ain't very wet. (*Smoothing himself down.*)

Mrs. T. (Having laid her shawl and bonnet aside, begins to lay the cloth for supper.) Ah! dear me, dear me, dear me! That's the way the world goes.

Tet. Which is the way the world goes, my dear?

Mrs. T. Oh, nothing. (*Mr. T. looks up in astonishment and abstractedly reads his paper. Mrs. T. gives vent to her humor in hitting the table hard with the articles she places on it.*) Ah! dear me, dear me, dear me! That's the way the world goes.

Tet. My duck you said that before. Which is the way the world goes?

Mrs. T. Oh, nothing.

Tet. Sophia, you said *that* before, too.

Mrs. T. Well, I'll say it again, if you like: Oh, nothing—there! and again, if you like: Oh, nothing—there! and again, if you like: oh, nothing—now, then!

Tet. (*In astonishment.*) My little woman, what has put you out?

Mrs. T. I'm sure *I* don't know. Don't ask me. Who said I was put out at all? *I* never did.

Tet. (*Lays aside paper, rises and crosses to r.*) Your supper will be ready in a minute, 'Dolphus. Your mother has been out into the wet, to the cook's shop, to buy it. It was very good of your mother so to do. *You* shall get some supper, too, very soon, Johnny. Your mother's pleased with you, my man, for being so attentive to your precious sister. (*Supper ready; children in bed and at the door watching preparations with interest.*) Yes, yes, your supper will be ready in a minute, 'Dolphus—your mother went out in the wet to buy it. It was very good of your mother so to do.

Mrs. T. (*Exhibiting signs of contrition, and catching Tetterby around the neck—weeping.*) Oh, 'Dolphus! how could I go and behave so. I am sure, 'Dolphus (*sobbing*), coming home, I had no more idea than a child unborn—

Tet. Say than the baby, my dear.

Mrs. T. —Had no more idea than the baby—Johnny, don't look at me, but look at her, or she'll fall out of your lap and be killed, and then you'll die in agonies of a broken heart, and serve you right—no more idea I hadn't than that darling, of being cross when I came home; but, somehow, Dolphus—

Tet. I see. I understand. My little woman was put

out. Hard times, and hard weather, and hard work, make it trying now and then. 'Dolf, my man, here's your mother been and bought, besides pease pudding, a whole knuckle of a lovely roast leg of pork, with lots of crackling left upon it, and with seasoning and mustard quite unlimited. Hand in your plate, my boy, and begin while its simmering. (*Tetterby serves, Dolph and Johnny return to their seats; children steal in and silently appeal to them, and they dole out a little to each. Mrs. T. does not eat, but keeps turning the ring on her finger; she laughs and cries without reason. Tetterby makes a dash at the children, and they scamper off.*)

Tet. My little woman, if the world goes that way, it appears to go the wrong way, and to choke you.

Mrs. T. Give me a drop of water, and don't speak to me for the present, or take any notice of me. Don't do it.

Tet. (*Gives water, and turns to Johnny, who is munching on his stool.*) Why are you wallowing in gluttony and idleness, instead of coming forward with the baby, that the sight of the innocent may revive its mother?

Mrs. T. (*Johnny approaching with the burden.*) I am not in a condition to bear this trying appeal to my feelings: advance another step and I shall hate you forever. (*Johnny returns to stool.*) I am better now. (*Laughs.*)

Tet. My little woman, are you quite sure you're better, or are you, Sophia, about to break out in a fresh direction?

Mrs. T.—No, 'Dolphus, no. I'm quite myself. (*Settles her hair, presses the palms of her hands, and laughs again.*) Come nearer, 'Dolphus. Let me ease my mind and tell you all about it. (*Tet brings his chair closer; she laughs, hugs him and wipes her eyes.*) You know,

'Dolphus, my dear, that when I was single I might have given myself away in several directions. At one time, four after me at once; two of them were sons of mars.

Tet. We're all sons of ma's, my dear, jointly with pa's.

Mrs. T. I don't mean that; I mean soldiers—sergeants.

Tet. Oh!

Mrs. T. Well, 'Dolphus, I'm sure I never think of such things now, to regret them; and I'm sure I've got as good a husband, and would do as much to prove that I was fond of him as—

Tet. As any little woman in the world. Very good. Very good.

Mrs. T. But you see, 'Dolphus, this being Christmas-time, when all people who have got money, like to spend some, I did, somehow, get a little out of sorts when I was in the streets just now. There were so many things to be sold—such delicious things to eat, such fine things to look at, such delightful things to have—and there was so much calculating and calculating necessary, before I durst lay out a sixpence for the commonest thing; and the basket was so large, and wanted so much in it, and my stock of money was so small, and would go such a little way—you hate me, don't you, 'Dolphus?

Tet. Not quite, as yet.

Mrs. T. Well! I'll tell you the whole truth, and then perhaps you will: I felt all this so much when I was trudging about in the cold, and when I saw a lot of other calculating faces and large baskets trudging about, too, that I began to think whether I mightn't have done better, and been happier, if I hadn't—(*Turns ring on her finger, and shakes her downcast head.*)

Tet. I see, if you hadn't married at all, or if you had married somebody else?

Mrs. T. (Sobbing.) Yes. That's really what I thought. Do you hate me now, 'Dolphus?

Tet. Why, no; I don't find that I do, as yet.

Mrs. T. (Kissing him.) I begin to hope you won't, now, 'Dolphus, though I haven't told you the worst. I can't think what came over me; I couldn't call up anything that seemed to bind us to each other. All the pleasures and enjoyments we had ever had—they seemed so poor and insignificant, I hated them; and I could think of nothing else except our being poor, and the number of mouths there were at home.

Tet. (Shaking her hand encouragingly.) Well, well, my dear, that's truth, after all. We are poor, and there are a number of mouths at home here.

Mrs. T. (Laying her hands upon his shoulders.) Ah! but Dolf, Dolf! my good, kind, patient fellow; when I had been at home a very little while—how different! oh, Dolf, dear, how different it was. I felt as if there was a rush of recollection on me all at once, that softened my hard heart and filled it up till it was bursting. All our struggles for a livelihood, all our cares and wants since we have been married, all the times of sickness, all the hours of watching we have ever had by one another, or by the children, seemed to speak to me and say that they had made us one, and that I never might have been, or could have been, or would have been, any other than the wife and mother I am. Then the cheap enjoyments that I could have trodden on so cruelly, got to be so precious to me—oh, so priceless and dear that I couldn't bear to think how much I had wronged them,

(Enter Redlaw, door L. 2 E.)

and I said and say again a hundred times, how could I ever behave so, 'Dolphus, how could I ever have the heart to do it? *(Weeps on his neck, and, raising her head, discovers Redlaw; screams and gets behind Tet-*

terby; children start from the bed and cling to her; she gazes and points at Redlaw.) Look at that man! Look there! What does he want?

Tet. My dear, I'll ask him if you'll let me go. What's the matter? How you shake.

Mrs. T. I saw him in the street when I was out just now. He looked at me and stood near me. I am afraid of him.

Tet. Afraid of him! Why?

Mrs. T. I don't know why—I—stop! husband! (*One hand on forehead and one upon her breast; an apparent and trembling consciousness of losing something.*)

Tet. Are you ill, my dear?

Mrs. T. (*Muttering.*) What is it that is going from me again? What is this that is going away? Ill? No, I'm quite well. (*Looking vacantly at the floor.*)

Tet. What may be your pleasure, sir, with us?

Red. I fear that my coming in unperceived has alarmed you; but you were talking and did not hear me.

Tet. My little woman says that it's not the first time you have alarmed her to-night.

Red. I am sorry for it. I remember to have observed her, for a few moments only, in the street. I had no intention of frightening her. (*Redlaw and Mrs. T. raise their eyes and regard each other with dread.*) My name is Redlaw. I come from the old college, hard by. A young gentleman, who is a student there, lodges in your house, does he not?

Tet. Mr. Denham?

Red. Yes.

Tet. (*Passes his hand across his forehead and looks quickly round the room, as if sensible of some change. Redlaw steps back and transfers the look of dread to him.*) The gentleman's room is up stairs, sir; there's a more convenient private entrance, but as you have

come in here, it will save your going out into the cold. if you take this little staircase, and go up to him that way, if you wish to see him.

Red. Yes, I wish to see him. Can you spare a light?

Tet. (*Staring at Redlaw as if stupified or fascinated.*) I'll light you, sir, if you'll follow me.

Red. No, I don't wish to be attended or announced to him. He does not expect me. I would rather go alone. Please give me the light if you can spare it, and I'll find the way. (*Hastily takes the candle, and in doing so touches Tetterby; withdraws his hand quickly and ascends the stairway to the landing, turns and stops; children cluster about the mother, gazing timidly at Redlaw; Mrs. T. seated, twisting the ring round and round on her finger; Tetterby with head bent forward on his breast, as if musing sullenly.*)

Tet. (*Roughly.*) Come! There's enough of this. Get to bed here!

Mrs. T. The place is inconvenient and small enough without you; get to bed.

(*Children scamper off to bed, Johnny and the baby lagging last; Mrs. T. glances contemptuously around the room, then sits pondering idly and dejectedly; Tetterby at the chimney bent over the fire.*)

Redlaw. (*Confusedly.*) What have I done! What am I going to do!

Phantom. (*Invisible.*) To be the benefactor of mankind.

SCENE II.—A street. Exterior of Jerusalem buildings, 1 a. Sign on building of "Tetterby & Co. Newsmen."

Enter Longford and William supporting George Swidgers, followed by Philip, R

Geo. Father!

Phil. My boy! My son George! (*Goes up to him.*)

Geo. You spoke just now of my being mother's favorite, long ago. It's a dreadful thing to think now of long ago!

Phil. No, no, no. Think of it. Don't say its dreadful. It's not dreadful to me, my son.

Geo. It cuts you to the heart, father.

Phil. (*Weeping.*) Yes, yes, so it does; but it does me good. It's a heavy sorrow to think of that time, but it does me good, George. Oh, think of it too, think of it too, and your heart will be softened more and more. Where's my son William? William, my boy, your mother loved him dearly to the last, and with her latest breath said, 'Tell him I forgave him, blessed him and prayed for him.' Those were her words to me. I have never forgotten them, and I'm eighty-seven.

Geo. Father! I feel that I am near death. I am so far gone that I can hardly speak, even on what my mind most runs on. Is there any hope for me?

Phil. There is hope for all who are softened and penitent. There is hope for all such. Oh! (*Clasping his hands and looking up.*) I was thankful, only yesterday, that I could remember this unhappy son when he was an innocent child. But what a comfort it is now to think that even his Creator has that remembrance.

Geo. Ah, the waste since then, the waste of life since then!

Longford. The sooner we get him to bed, the better.

Wm. That's what I say, that's where it is exactly. Come, father; he'll waste away if we stand here all the evening. You're right, father. Let us get him into his lodgings and into his bed, while we can, and once there, to keep him as quiet as ever we can, and Mrs. William may bring him around in time. Come, father, come! This is the place. [*Exeunt into building.*]

SCENE III.—*Room in Jerusalem buildings, 2 G. Plain chamber; Couch or lounge at L. 2 E., that can be readily withdrawn at close of scene; set, fireplace, R 2 E.; small table near head of couch; two chairs. Edmund Longford, in dressing-gown, discovered lying on couch reading a book.*

Enter Redlaw, R.

Ed. (Starting up.) Mr. Redlaw!

Red. (Stopping him by gesture of the arm.) Don't come near to me. I will sit here. Remain you where you are! (*Seats himself near entrance; Edmund stands with hand upon the couch, for support.*) I heard by an accident—by what accident is no matter—that one of my class was ill and solitary. I received no other description of him than that he lived in this street; beginning my enquiries at the first house in it, I have found him.

Ed. I have been ill, sir (*With awe and hesitation.*), but am greatly better. An attack of fever—of the brain, I believe—has weakened me, but I am much better. I cannot say I have been solitary in my illness, or I should forget the ministering hand that has been near me.

Red. You are speaking of the keeper's wife?

Ed. Yes.

Red. (With head averted, gazing on the ground—cold and apathetic) I remembered your name, when it was mentioned to me down stairs, just now, and I recollect your face. We have held but very little personal communication together?

Ed. Very little.

Red. You have retired and withdrawn from me more than any of the rest, I think?

Ed. I have, sir.

Red. And why? (*Without expression of interest, but with a wayward kind of curiosity.*) Why? How

comes it that you have sought to keep especially from me the knowledge of your remaining here, at this season, when all the rest have dispersed, and of your being ill? I want to know why this is?

Ed. Mr. Redlaw, you have discovered me; you know my secret.

Red. Secret? I know?

Ed. Yes. Your manner, so different from the interest and sympathy which endear you to so many hearts, your altered voice, the constraint there is in everything you say, and in your looks, warn me that you know me. That you would conceal it, even now, is but a proof to me of your natural kindness, and of the bar between us.

Red. Ha, ha, ha! (*Vacantly and contemptuously.*)

Ed. But, Mr. Redlaw, as a just man and a good man, think how innocent I am, except in name and descent, of participation in any wrong inflicted on you, or in any sorrow you have borne.

Red. Sorrow! Ha, ha, ha. Wrong! What are those to me?

Ed. For Heaven's sake, do not let the mere interchange of a few words with me change you like this, sir! Let me pass again from your knowledge and notice; let me occupy my old, reserved and distant place among those whom you instruct. Know me only by the name I have assumed, and not by that of Longford—

Red. Longford! (*Starts, clasps his head with both hands, and advances toward Edmund, as if inspired with a memory of the past; halts, and resumes his former expression.*)

Ed. The name my mother bears, sir; the name she took when she might, perhaps, have taken one more honored. Mr. Redlaw, I know that history. I am the child of a marriage that has not proved itself a well-assorted or a happy one. From infancy, I have heard you spoken

of with honor and respect—with something that was almost reverence. The little lesson I learned from my mother has shed a lustre on your name. At last, a poor student myself, from whom could I learn but you? (*Redlaw, unmoved, regards him with a staring frown*) Our ages and positions are so different, sir, and I am so accustomed to regard you from a distance, that I wonder at my presumption when I touch upon a theme that must awaken many sad and tender memories. But to one who—I may say, who felt no common interest in my mother once—it may be something to hear, now that all is past, with what undescribable feelings of affection I have, in my obscurity, regarded you; with what pain and reluctance I have kept aloof from your encouragement when a word of it would have made me rich; yet how I have felt it fit that I should hold my course, content to know you and to be unknown by you. Mr. Redlaw, what I would have said I have said ill, for my strength is strange to me as yet; but for anything unworthy in this fraud of mine, forgive me, and for all the rest forget me. (*Advances toward Redlaw, extending his hand.*)

Red. (*Starely and drawing back.*) Don't come nearer to me! (*Edmund stops—shocked, and passes his hand thoughtfully across his forehead as if aware of some change.*) The past is past. It dies like the brutes. Who talks to me of its traces in my life? He raves or lies! What have I to do with your distempered dreams? If you want money, here it is. (*Throwing purse on table.*) I came to offer it, and that is all I came for. There can be nothing else that brings me here. (*Holding his head with both hands, as if trying to remember.*)

There can be nothing else, and yet—

Ed. (*Takes up the purse and holds it to him.*) Take it back, sir. I wish you could take from me with it the remembrance of your words and offer.

Red. You do? You do?

Ed. I do.

Red. (*Approaches him; takes the purse; turns him by the arm and looks into his face.*) There is sorrow and trouble in sickness, is there not? (*Laughs.*)

Ed. (*Absently.*) Yes.

Red. In its unrest, in its anxiety, in its suspense, in all its train of physical and mental miseries? (*Wildly and exultingly.*) All best forgotten are they not?

Milly. (*Outside.*) I can see very well, now, thank you, Dolf. Don't cry, dear. Father and mother will be comfortable again to-morrow, and home will be comfortable, too. A gentleman with him, is there?

Red. (*Releasing his hold of Edmund, who passes his hand confusedly across his forehead.*) I have feared from the first moment to meet her. There is a steady quality of goodness in her that I dread to influence. I may be the murderer of what is tenderest and best in her bosom. *Knock, R.*) Shall I dismiss it as an idle foreboding, or still avoid her. (*Looking uneasily around. Knock, R.*) Of all the visitors who could come here (*in a tone of alarm, turning to Edmund*), this is the one I should desire most to avoid. Hide me! (*Edmund points to door in flat, and Redlaw passes quickly in.*)

Ed. (*On couch.*) Come in.

Enter Milly, R.

Milly. Dear Mr. Edmund (*looking around*), they told me there was a gentleman here.

Ed. There is no one here but I.

Milly. There has been some one?

Ed. Yes, yes, there has been some one.

Milly. (*Puts little basket on table, approaches head of couch as if expecting a kindly greeting, and betrays a*

little surprise.) Are you quite as well to-night? Your head is not so cool as in the afternoon. (*Touching him on the brow.*)

Ed. (*Petulantly.*) Tut: very little ails me.

Milly. (*After busying about the room, and making things tidy, sits at table and begins to sew.*) It's the new muslin curtain for the window, Mr. Edmund. It will look very clean and nice, though it costs very little, and will save your eyes from the light. My William says the room should not be too light just now, when you are recovering so well, or the glare might make you giddy.

Ed. (*Fretful and impatient.*) The room will do.

Milly. (*Lays down her work and approaches him.*) The pillows are not comfortable, I will soon put them right.

Ed. They are very well. Leave them alone, pray. You make so much of everything.

Milly. (*Pausing, timidly resumes her work.*) Ah, Mr. Edmund, how true the saying is, that adversity is a good teacher. Health will be more precious to you, after this illness, than it has ever been, and years hence, at this time of the year, grateful recollections will revive kindly memories of those who have served you. When I have seen you so touched by the kindness and attention of the poor people down stairs, I have felt that you thought even that experience some repayment for the loss of health; and I have read in your face, as plain as if it was a book, that but for some trouble and sorrow we should never know half the good there is about us.

Ed. (*Rising from the couch.*) We needn't magnify the merit, Mrs. William. The people down stairs will be paid in good time, I dare say, for any little extra service they may have rendered me; I am much obliged to you, too. (*She stops her work and looks at him.*) I can't be made to feel more obliged by your exaggerating

the case. I am sensible that you have been interested in me, and I say I am much obliged to you. What more would you have? (*Her work falls on her lap; he walks to and fro, stopping now and then.*) I say again I am much obliged to you. Why weaken my sense of obligation by preferring enormous claims upon me? Trouble, sorrow, affliction, adversity! One might suppose I had been dying a score of deaths here!

Milly. (*Rising and approaching him.*) Do you believe, Mr. Edmund, that I spoke of the poor people of the house, with any reference to myself? To me?

Ed. Oh! I think nothing about it, my good creature. I have had an indisposition, which your solicitude—observe! I say solicitude—makes a great deal more of than it merits; and it's over and we can't perpetuate it. (*Takes book and sits at table.*)

Milly. (*Taking up her basket.*) Mr. Edmund, would you rather be alone?

Ed. There is no reason why I should detain you here.

Milly. Except—(*Hesitating and showing her work.*)

Ed. Oh! the curtain, ha, ha, ha: that's not worth staying for.

Milly. (*Standing before him with a look of entreaty.*) If you should want me, I will come back willingly. When you did want me, I was quite happy to come; there was no merit in it. I think you must be afraid, that now you are getting well, I may be troublesome to you, but I should not have been, indeed. I should have come no longer than your weakness and confinement lasted. You owe me nothing; but it is right that you should deal as justly by me as if I was a lady—even the very lady you love; and if you suspect me of meanly making much of the little I have tried to do to comfort your sick-room, you do yourself more wrong than ever you can do me. That is why I am sorry. That is why

I am very sorry. [*Exit, R. Edmund staring drearily, as if transfixed.*]

Re-enter Redlaw.

Red. (*Coming down stage.*) When sickness lays its hand on you again (*looking at him fiercely*), may it be soon!—Die here! Rot here!

Ed. (*Catching at his cloak.*) What have you done? What change have you wrought in me? What curse have you brought upon me? Give me back myself!

Red. (*Violently.*) Give me back myself! I am infected! I am infectious! I am charged with poison for my own mind, and the minds of all mankind. Where I felt interest, compassion, sympathy, I am turning into stone. Selfishness and ingratitude spring up in my blighted footsteps. I am only less base than the wretches whom I make so, that in the moment of transformation I hate them. Release your hold! (*Struggles with him, strikes him, and exits hurriedly L.*)

Ed. [*Recovers himself quickly and follows after Redlaw.*] I'll not release my hold. He shall not escape me until he restores me to myself. [*Exit, L.*]

[*Couch withdrawn.*]

SCENE IV.—*A room in Jerusalem Buildings scantily furnished, 4 G.; Geo. Swidgers on truckle-bed near R. 3 E.; Wm. Swidgers at bed R., James Longford takes lighted candle from small stand at head of bed to answer knock at door in flat, L. C.; old Philip at bedside, R. C.; Longford opens door and Redlaw enters.*

Long. Mr. Redlaw! [*Starts, betrays emotion and retires to L. U. E. and remains with his back toward Redlaw, who stops, stares at him with surprise, as if endeavoring to recall his recollections.*]

Phil. (*Shuffling toward the door.*) Mr. Redlaw, this is like you, sir. You have heard of it, and have come after us to render any help you can. (*Coming down to bedside.*) Ah, too late, too late, Mr. Redlaw.

Wm. That's what I say, father. That's where it is, exactly. To keep as quiet as ever we can while he's a-dozing, is the only thing to do. You're right, father.

Red. Who is this?

Phil. (*Kneeling at the bedside.*) My son George, Mr. Redlaw. My eldest son, George, who was more his mother's pride than all the rest.

Red. (*Turning his eyes to Longford, as if trying to recall him; Longford exits door in flat.*) William, who is that man that went out?

Wm. Why, you see, sir, that's what I say myself. Why should a man ever go and gamble, and the like of that, and let himself down, inch by inch, till he can't let himself down any lower?

Red. Has he done so?

Wm. Just exactly that, sir, as I'm told. He knows a little about medicine, it seems, and having been way-faring toward London with my unhappy brother that you see here, (*Passes his coat sleeve across his eyes.*) and being a lodger up stairs for the night, he looked in to attend upon him. What a mournful spectacle, sir! But that's where it is. It's enough to kill my father. (*Retires to bedside.*)

Red. (*Calling to mind the spell he diffused, crosses to L. and turns his face from the bed.*) Was it only yesterday when I observed the memory of this old man to be a tissue of sorrow and trouble, and shall I be afraid to-night to shake it? Are such remembrances as I can drive away so precious to this dying man that I need fear for him? No! I'll stay here.

Phil. (*Still kneeling at the bed.*) He was a child

once. He played with children. Before he laid down on his bed at night, and fell into his guiltless rest, he said his prayers at his poor mother's knee. I have seen him do it many a time, and seen her lay his head upon her breast and kiss him. Sorrowful as it was to her, and to me, to think of this, when he went so wrong, and when our hopes and plans for him were all broken, this gave him still a hold upon us that nothing else could have given. Oh, Father, so much better than the fathers upon earth! Oh, Father, so much more afflicted by the errors of thy children, take this wanderer back! Not as he is, but as he was then; let him cry to Thee as he has so often seemed to cry to us!

Geo. (*Starting up.*) Stop him! do not let him go! Where am I? Father!

Phil. Yes, yes, my son George.

Geo. My time is very short; my breath is shorter, (*supporting himself on one arm, and with the other groping in the air*) and I remember there is something on my mind concerning the man who was here just now. Father and William—wait!—is there really anything in black out there?

Phil. Yes, yes; it is real.

Geo. Is it a man?

Wm. (*Bending kindly over him.*) What I say myself, George. It's Mr. Redlaw.

Geo. I thought I had dreamed of him. Ask him to come here. (*Redlaw goes to the bed and George motions him to seat himself upon it, which he does.*) It has been so ripped up, to-night, sir, (*laying his hand upon his heart*) by the sight of my poor old father, and the thought of all the trouble I have been the cause of, and all the wrong and sorrow lying at my door, that—(*passes his arm across his forehead*) that what I can do right, with my mind running on so much, so fast, I'll try

to do There was another man here; did you see him?
(*Hand to forehead.*)

Red. The spell is coming, I know the fatal sign.
(*Aside.*) I die.

Geo. He is penniless, hungry and destitute. He is completely beaten down, and has no resource at all. Look after him! Lose no time! I know he has it in his mind to kill himself.

Red. (*Aside.*) It is working. His face is changing, hardening, deepening, in all its shades, and losing all its sorrow.

Geo. Don't you remember? Don't you know Longford? (*Pause, hand over face, then with a scowling look at Redlaw*) Why, blast you all, what have you been doing to me here? I have lived bold, and I mean to die bold. To the Devil with you! (*Lays back in bed, puts his arms up over his head and ears, as if resolute to keep his threat. Redlaw starts back from the bed and crosses to L; Philip, who has previously left the bed, returning, avoids it quickly with abhorrence.*)

Phil. (*Hurriedly.*) Where's my son William? William, come away from here. We'll go home.

Wm. Home, father! Are you going to leave your own son?

Phil. Where's my son?

Wm. Where? why there!

Phil. (*Trembling with resentment.*) That's no son of mine. No such wretch as that has any claim on me. My children are pleasant to look at, and they wait upon me and get my meat and drink ready, and are useful to me; I've a right to it! I'm eighty-seven.

Wm. (*Hands in pockets.*) You're old enough to be no older. I don't know what good you are myself. We could have a deal more pleasure without you.

Phil. My son, Mr. Redlaw! My son, too! The

boy talking to me of *my* son! Why what has he ever done to give me pleasure, I should like to know?

Wm. (*Sulkily.*) I don't know what you have ever done to give *me* pleasure?

Phil. Let me think. For how many Christmas-times running, have I sat in my warm place, and never had to come out in the cold night air; and have made good cheer, without being disturbed by any such wretched sight as him there? Is it twenty, William?

Wm. Nigher forty, it seems. (*To Redlaw, with irritation.*) Why, when I look at my father, sir, and come to think of it, I'm whipped if I can see anything in him but a calender of ever so many years of eating and drinking, and making himself comfortable over and over again.

Phil. I—I'm eighty-seven, and I don't know as I ever was much put out by anything. I've had a power of pleasant times. I recollect once—no, I don't—no, its broken off. It was something about a game of cricket and a friend of mine, but it's somehow broken off. I wonder who he was—I suppose I liked him? And I wonder what became of him—I suppose he died? But I don't know. And I don't care, neither; I don't care a bit. (*Chuckling and shaking his head, pulls a bit of holly out of his waistcoat pocket and looks at it.*) Berries, eh? Ah! It's a pity they are not good to eat. I recollect, when I was a little chap about as high as that, and out a walking with—let me see—who was I out a-walking with?—No, I don't remember how that was. I don't remember as I ever walked with any one particular, or cared for any one, or any one for me. Berries, eh? There's good cheer when there's berries. Well; I ought to have my share of it, and to be waited on, and kept warm and comfortable; for I'm eighty-seven, and a poor old man. I'm eighty-seven.

Eigh'ty-seven! (*Delivered in driveling, pitiable manner—nubbling the leaves of holly, and spitting them out. William coldly and sullenly regarding his father; George observing them with determined apathy.*)

Red. L. I cannot, will not, bear this longer. Shadow of myself! spirit of my darker hours! come back and haunt me day and night, but take this gift away! Or, if it must still rest with me, deprive me of the dreadful power of giving it to others. Undo what I have done. Leave me benighted, but restore the day to these poor creatures whom I have curséd. [*Exit hastily, L.*]

CURTAIN.

Act. III.

THE GIFT REVERSED.

SCENE I.—*A chamber in the College, 1 G.; centre doors thrown open, showing Redlaw's chamber as in Scene 1, Act 1; Gauze on inside of doors to be removed or dropped after the shade of Milly disappears. Set fire-place, L.—painted fire; table and chair, R. C. Soft Christmas music at rise of curtain. Redlaw discovered seated L. of table. The waif lying before the fire buried in slumber, L. The Phantom between the boy and door, L. C., observing Redlaw. Milly looking toward the boy as if in pity.*

Red. (*Listening to the music, and moved by it rises, stretches forth his hands as if he welcomes the sound—trembles gently—his eyes appear filled with tears, puts his hands before them, and bows. As the music ceases, raises his head to listen.*) It tells me the value of what I have lost. I fervently thank Heaven for the knowl-

edge—(*Discovers Phantom and Milly.*) Spectre! I have not been stubborn or presumptuous in respect to her. Oh, do not bring her here! Spare me that!

Phant. This is but a shadow, when the morning shines seek out the reality whose image I present before you.

Red. Is it my inexorable doom to do so?

Phant. It is.

Red. To destroy her peace, her goodness; to make her what I am myself and what I have made others?

Phant. I have said seek her out. I have said no more.

Red. Oh, tell me, can I undo what I have done?

Phant. No.

Red. I do not ask restoration to myself. What I abandoned, I abandoned of my own will, and have justly lost. But for those to whom I have transferred the fatal gift; who never sought it; who unknowingly received a curse of which they had no warning; and which they had no power to shun; can I do nothing?

Phant. Nothing.

Red. If I can not, can any one? (*Phantom turns his head to Milly.*) Ah! can she? (*Phantom makes a gesture of dismissal, and the low platform upon which Milly stands is gradually drawn up stage.*) Stay. For a moment. I know that some change fell upon me when those sounds were in the air just now. Tell me, have I lost the power of harming her? May I go near her without dread? (*Phantom looks at Milly as she slowly disappears.*) At least, say this—has she henceforth the consciousness of any power to set right what I have done?

Phant. She has not.

Red. Has she the power bestowed on her without the consciousness?

Phant. Seek her out when the morning shines.

(Milly disappears.)

Redlaw. Terrible instructor (*on his knees to Phantom*), by whom I was renounced, but by whom I am revisited—in which and in whose milder aspect, I would fain believe I have a gleam of hope—I will obey without inquiry, praying that the cry I have sent up in the anguish of my soul has been, or will be, heard, in behalf of those whom I have injured beyond human reparation. But there is one thing—(*Rising.*)

Phant. You speak to me of what is lying here. (*Pointing to the boy.*)

Red. I do. You know what I would ask. Why has this child alone been proof against my influence, and why have I detected in its thoughts a terrible companionship with mine?

Phant. This is the most complete illustration of a human creature, utterly bereft of such remembrances as you have yielded up. No softening memory of sorrow, wrong or trouble enters here, because this wretched mortal from his birth has been abandoned to a worse condition than the beasts, and has, within his knowledge, no one contrast, no humanizing touch to make a grain of such a memory spring up in his hardened breast. All within this desolate creature is barren wilderness. All within the man bereft of what you have resigned is the same barren wilderness. Woe to such a man! Woe, ten fold, to the nation that shall count its monsters such as this, lying here, by hundreds and by thousands! *Redlaw clasps his hands, and looks with trembling fear and pity from boy to Phantom.*) Behold, I say, the perfect type of what it was your choice to be. Your influence is powerless here, because from this child's bosom you can banish nothing. His thoughts have been in terrible companionship with yours, because you have

gone down to his unnatural level. He is the growth of man's indifference: you are the growth of man's presumption. The beneficent design of Heaven is in each case overthrown, and from the extremes of the immaterial world you come together. (*Redlaw stoops down and bends over the boy with evident compassion and sympathy. Phantom exits backward through centre doors, which close after him.*)

(*Red.* Sleep, sleep, poor waif, for unless the spell is broken you are henceforth my only companion. Oh, Phantoms! Punishers of impious thoughts, look upon me! In the material world, as I have long taught, nothing can be spared; no step or atom in the wondrous structure could be lost, without a blank being made in the great universe, I know, now, it is the same with good and evil, happiness and sorrow, in the memories of men. Pity me! Relieve me! Gone, gone—

Waif. (*Starting up.*) Come! you let me go! I've done nothing to you. Don't you touch me. You've not brought me here to take my money away.

Red. (*Rising from kneeling over boy.*) No, here's more. (*Throws money down, boy throws his body on it and watches Redlaw resume his seat at table, and puts his face in his hands; when he picks it up, sits before the fire and takes crust of bread from his breast and munches it.*)

Waif. (*Listening and starting up.*) Hers's the woman coming. (*Redlaw reaches the door, locks it, and stops the boy. Knocking.*) Let me go to her, will you?

Red. Not now. Stay here. Nobody must pass in or out of the room now. Who's that?

Milly. (*Outside.*) It's I, sir. Pray, sir, let me in!

Red. No! not for the world.

Milly. Mr. Redlaw, Mr. Redlaw, pray, sir, let me in.

Red. What is the matter? (*Holding the boy.*)

Milly. The miserable man you saw is worse, and nothing I can say will wake him from his terrible infatuation. William's father has turned childish in a moment. William himself is changed. The shock has been too sudden for him; I cannot understand him; he is not like himself. Oh, Mr. Redlaw, pray advise me; help me!

Red. No, no, no! Not yet!

Milly. Mr. Redlaw! Dear sir! George has been muttering in his doze about the man you saw, who, he fears, will kill himself.

Red. Better he should do it than come near me!

Milly. George says in his wanderings, that you know him; that he was your friend once, long ago; that he is the ruined father of a student here—my mind misgives me, of the young gentleman who has been ill. What is to be done? How is he to be followed? How is he to be saved? Mr. Redlaw, pray, oh, pray, advise me! Help me!

Red. (*Struggling with the boy to prevent him from going to her.*) From the darkness of mind, let the glimmering contrition, which I know is there, shine up, and show my misery and my hopes.

Waif. Let me go, will you? I'll bite you.

Milly. (*Knocking.*) Help me, help me, let me in!

Red. Wait, Milly, until the morning shines, and I will seek you out.

Milly. Help! He was your friend once, how shall he be followed, how shall he be saved? They are all changed; (*going away*) there is no one else to help me; what shall I do?

Red. Go, Milly, go, and let us hope for a change in the morning. Come, boy, into the adjoining room, and await the approach of day.

Waif. I want to go to the woman! I won't go with you! [*Exeunt R., struggling.*]

 *Clear stage.*

SCENE II.—*Tetterby's apartment as in Scene I, Act 2.*

Mr. Tetterby sitting moodily at the breakfast table,

Mrs. Tetterby driving the children out, door L. 3 E.

Mrs. T. Begone, now! and don't show yourselves till you're sent for. These children will be the death of me, and I'm sure, the sooner, the better. (*Goes to table, sits, folds her arms, and rocks cradle with her foot.*) 'Dolphus, why don't you do something?

Tet. Because I don't care about doing anything.

Mrs. T. I am sure *I* don't.

Tet. I'll take my oath *I* don't.

Mrs. T. You had better read your paper than do nothing at all.

Tet. What's there to read in a paper?

Mrs. T. What? Police.

Tet. It's nothing to me. What do I care what people do, or are done to?

Mrs. T. Suicides.

Tet. No business of mine.

Mrs. T. Births, deaths and marriages, are those nothing to you?

Tet. If the births were all over for good, and all to-day, and the deaths were all to begin to-morrow, I don't see why it should interest me till I thought it was a-coming to my turn. As to marriages, I've done it myself, I know quite enough about *them*.

Mrs. T. Oh, you're a consistent man, ain't you? You with the screen of your own making there, made of nothing else but bits of newspapers, which you sit and read to the children by the half-hour together.

Tet. Say, used to, if you please. You won't find me doing so any more; I'm wiser now.

Mrs. T. Bah! Wiser, indeed! Are you better?

Tet. I don't know as any of us are better or happier, either. (*Turning in his chair to the screen.*) This used to be one of the family favorites, and used to draw tears from the children, and make 'em good: 'Melancholy case of Destitution.—Yesterday a small man with a baby in his arms, and surrounded by half-a-dozen ragged little ones, of various ages between two and ten, the whole of whom were in a famishing condition, appeared before the Worthy Magistrate, and made the following recital:—Ha! I don't understand it, I'm sure. I don't see what it has to do with us.

Mrs. T. How old and shabby he looks! I never saw such a change in a man. Ah! dear me, dear me, it was a sacrifice!

Tet. If you mean your marriage was a sacrifice my good woman—

Mrs. T. I do mean it.

Tet. Why, then I mean to say there are two sides to that affair; and that *I* was the sacrifice; and that I wish the sacrifice hadn't been accepted.

Mrs. T. I wish it hadn't, with all my heart and soul, I do assure you. You can't wish it more than I do.

Tet. I don't know what I saw in her. I'm sure, if I saw anything, it's not there now. I was thinking so last night, after supper, by the fire. She's fat, she's aging, she won't bear comparison with other women.

Mrs. T. He's common-looking, he has no air with him, he's small, he's beginning to stoop, and he's getting bald.

Tet. I must have been half out of my mind when I did it.

Mrs. T. My senses must have forsook me. That's the only way in which I can explain it to myself.

Tet. We had better finish our breakfast.

Mrs. T. I don't want any breakfast.

Enter Johnny, hastily, R. 3 E.

Johnny. Here! Mother! Father! Here's Mrs. William coming down the street! (*Lifts baby from the cradle and exits L. 3 E.* *Mr. and Mrs. Tetterby rub their foreheads—their faces begin to brighten.*)

Tet. Why, Lord forgive me, what evil tempers have I been giving way to? What has been the matter here?

Mrs. T. (*Sobbing, with her apron to her eyes.*) How could I ever treat him ill again, after all I said and felt last night?

Tet. Am I a brute, or is there any good in me at all? Sophia! my little woman!

Mrs. T. 'Dolphus, dear.

Tet. I—I've been in a state of mind that I can't abear to think of, Sophia.

Mrs. T. Oh! It's nothing to what I've been in, Dolf. (*In a burst of grief.*)

Tet. My Sophia, don't take on. I never shall forgive myself. I must have nearly broke your heart, I know.

Mrs. T. No, Dolf, no. It was me! Me!

Tet. My little woman, don't. You make me reproach myself dreadful, when you show such a noble spirit. Sophia, my dear, you don't know what I thought. I showed it bad enough, no doubt; but what I thought, my little woman!—

Mrs. T. Oh, dear Dolf, don't! Don't!

Tet. Sophia, I must reveal it. I couldn't rest in my conscience unless I mentioned it. My little woman—

Johnny. (*At the door.*) Mrs. William's very nearly here!

Tet. My little woman, I wondered how (*supporting himself by the chair*) I wondered how I had ever admired you—I forgot the precious children you have brought about me, and thought you didn't look as slim as I could wish. I—I never gave a recollection to the cares you've had as my wife, and along of me and mine, when you might have had hardly any with another man, who got on better and was luckier than me. I quarreled with you for having aged a little in the rough years you have lightened for me. Can you believe it, my little woman? I hardly can myself.

Mrs. T. (*Laughing and crying, catches his face in her hands.*) Oh, Dolf! I am so happy that you thought so; I am so grateful that you thought so! For I thought that you were common-looking, Dolf; and so you are, my dear, and may you be the commonest of all sights in my eyes, till you close them with your own good hands. I thought that you were small; and so you are, and I'll make much of you because you are, and more of you because I love my husband. I thought that you began to stoop; and so you do, and you shall lean on me, and I'll do all I can to keep you up. I thought there was no air about you; but there is, and it's the air of home, and that's the purest and best there is, and Heaven bless home once more, and all belonging to it, Dolf! (*Embrace.*)

Johnny. (*At the door.*) Hurrah! Here's Mrs. William!

Enter Milly and the children, door L. 3 E., trooping and dancing around her—running and kissing Mr. and Mrs. Tetterby; Milly kisses the baby and Johnny, Mr. and Mrs. T. kiss Milly's hands.

Milly. What! are you all so glad to see me, too, this bright Christmas morning? Oh, dear, how delightful

this is! Oh, dear, what delicious tears you make me shed. How can I ever have deserved this? What have I done to be so loved?

Tet. Who can help it?

Mrs. T. Who can help it?

Children. Who can help it? (*clinging to her dress, and laying their faces against it.*)

Milly. I never was so moved (*drying her eyes*) as I have been this morning. I must tell you as soon as I can speak. Mr. Redlaw came to me at sunrise, and with a tenderness in his manner, more as if I had been his darling daughter than myself, implored me to go with him to where William's brother George is lying ill. We went together, and all the way along he was so kind and so subdued, and seemed to put such trust and hope in me, that I could not help crying with pleasure. When we got to the house we met a woman at the door—somebody had bruised and hurt her, I am afraid—who caught me by the hand, and blessed me as I passed.

Tet. She was right, she was right.

Mrs. T. Just as I would have done myself.

Milly. Ah, but there's more than that. When we got up-stairs into the room, the sick man, who had lain for hours in a state from which no effort could rouse him, rose up in his bed, and, bursting into tears, stretched out his arms to me, and said that he had led a misspent life, but that he was truly repentant now, in his sorrow for the past, which was all as plain to him as a great prospect, from which a dense cloud had cleared away, and that he entreated me to ask his poor old father for his pardon and for his blessing, and to say a prayer beside his bed. And when I did so, Mr. Redlaw joined in it so fervently, and then so thanked and thanked me, and thanked Heaven, that my heart quite overflowed, and I could have done nothing but sob and

cry, if the sick man had not begged me to sit down by him—which made me quiet, of course. As I sat there, he held my hand in his until he sunk in a doze; and even then, when I withdrew my hand to leave him to come here—which Mr. Redlaw was very earnest indeed in wishing me to do—his hand felt for mine, so that some one else was obliged to take my place and make believe to give him my hand back. Oh dear, oh dear (*sobbing*). How thankful and how happy I should feel, and do feel, for all this. (*Redlaw enters door L. 3 E., pauses to observe the group, then ascends the stairs and stops on the landing.*)

Mrs. T. You are a dear good creature, and deserve to be loved by everybody.

Children. Yes, we all love her!

Milly. Oh dear, oh dear, there's Mr. Redlaw waiting for me, and I wasting my time here, when Mr. Edmund may want me. I am coming, Mr. Redlaw. Good-bye, dear children, I'll see you again by and by. (*Ascends the stairs.*)

SCENE III.—*Exterior of Jerusalem Buildings as in Scene 2, Act 2.*

Enter Milly. door in flat, followed by Redlaw, meeting Edmund R., Redlaw withdraws to L.

Ed. Ah, my kind nurse, (*falling on his knees and taking her hand*) gentlest, best of creatures, forgive my ingratitude!

Milly. (*Guilelessly.*) Oh dear, oh dear! here's another of them! Oh dear, here's somebody else who likes me. What shall I ever do. (*Puts her hands before her face and appears to weep for joy.*)

Ed. I was not myself. I don't know what it was—it was some consequence of my disorder, perhaps—I was mad. But I am so no longer. Almost as I speak I am

restored. I heard the children crying out your name, and the shade passed from me at the very sound of it. Oh, don't weep! Dear Mrs. William, if you could read my heart, and only know with what affection and what grateful homage it is glowing, you would not let me see you weep. It is such deep reproach.

Milly. No, no, it's not that. It's not, indeed. It's joy. It's wonder that you should think it necessary to ask me to forgive so little, and yet it's pleasure that you do.

Ed. And will you come again? and will you finish the little curtain?

Milly. No. (*Drying her eyes and shaking her head.*) You won't care for *my* needle work now.

Ed. Is it forgiving me to say that?

Milly. (*Takes him aside and whispers.*) There is news from your home, Mr. Edmund.

Ed. News? How?

Milly. Either your not writing when you were very ill, or the change in your handwriting when you began to be better, created some suspicion of the truth; however that is—but you're sure you'll not be the worse for any news, if it's not bad news?

Ed. Sure.

Milly. Then there's some one come!

Ed. My mother? (*Glancing toward Redlaw.*)

Milly. Hush! No.

Ed. It can be no one else.

Milly. Indeed. Are you sure?

Ed. It is not—

Milly. (*Puts her hand over his mouth.*) Yes it is! The young lady—she is very like the miniature, Mr. Edmund, but she is prettier—was too unhappy to rest without satisfying her doubts, and came up last night, with a little servant-maid. As you always dated your

letter from the college, she came there; and before I saw Mr. Redlaw this morning, I saw her. *She likes me, too! Oh, dear, that's another.*

Ed. This morning! Where is she now?

Milly. Why, she is now (*advancing her lips to his ear*) in my little parlor in the lodge, and waiting to see you. (*Starts to go, but she detains him.*) Mr. Redlaw is much altered, and has told me this morning that his memory is impaired. Be very considerate to him, Mr. Edmund; he needs that from us all.

Ed. Dear Mrs. William, your caution shall be heeded. For the present, good-bye. (*Exit L. As he passes Redlaw, bows respectfully to him, Redlaw returns the salutation courteously and even humbly; looks after him, drops his head in his hand, as if trying to remember.*)

Milly. Come, Mr. Redlaw, time is flying.

Red. (*Rousing himself.*) Where shall we go?

Milly. Shall we not go home, now, where my husband and father are?

Red. Yes. (*Puts his arm in hers. Exeunt R.*)

SCENE IV.—*A room in the Porter's Lodge, 4 G. Philip seated in his chair in the chimney-corner, with eyes fixed on the ground; William on opposite side of fire-place, leaning against mantel and regarding his father. Enter Milly R., followed by Redlaw who remains at R. Philip and William brighten up.*

Milly. Oh, dear, dear, dear, they are pleased to see me, like the rest. (*Clapping her hands in ecstasy, and stopping short.*) Here are two more! (*Runs into William's arms, and lays head on his shoulder.*)

Philip. (*Rising.*) Why, where has my quiet Mouse been all this time? She has been a long while away. (*Embracing Milly.*) I find that it's impossible for me to get along without Mouse. I—where's my son Wil-

liam—I fancy I have been dreaming, William.

William. That's what I say myself, father. *I have been in an ugly sort of dream, I think—How are you, father? Are you pretty well?*

Phil. Strong and brave, my boy.

Wm. (*Shaking hands with him, patting him on the back, and rubbing him gently down.*) What a wonderful man you are, father! Are you really pretty hearty, though?

Phil. I never was fresher or stouter in my life, my boy.

Wm. What a wonderful man you are, father! But that's exactly where it is. When I think of all that my father's gone through, and all the chances and changes and sorrows and troubles, that have happened to him in the course of his long life, and under which his head has grown gray, and years upon years have gathered on it, I feel as if we couldn't do enough to honor the old gentleman and make his old age easy.—How are you, father? Are you really pretty well, though?

Phil. I ask your pardon, Mr. Redlaw, but didn't know you were here, sir, or should have made less free. It reminds me, Mr. Redlaw, seeing you here on Christmas morning, of the time when you was a student yourself, and worked so hard that you was backward and forward in our library even at Christmas-time. Ha! ha! I'm old enough to remember that; and I remember it right well, I do, though I'm eighty-seven. It was after you left here that my poor wife died. You remember my poor wife, Mr. Redlaw?

Red. Yes.

Phil. Yes, she was a dear creature—I recollect you come here one Christmas morning with a young lady—I ask your pardon, Mr. Redlaw, but I think it was a sister that you was very much attached to?

Red. I do not remember—I had a sister.

Phil. One Christmas morning, that you came here with her, and it began to snow, and my wife invited the young lady to walk in and sit by the fire that is always a-burning on Christmas Day, in what used to be, before our ten poor gentlemen commuted, our great dinner hall. I was there; and I recollect as I was stirring up the blaze for the young lady to warm her pretty feet by, she read the scroll out loud that is underneath that picture, ‘*Lord, keep my memory green!*’ She and my poor wife fell a-talking about it; and it’s a strange thing to think of, now, and they both said—both being so unlike to die—that it was a good prayer, and it was one they would put up very earnestly, if they were called away young, with reference to those who were dearest to them. ‘My brother,’ says the young lady, ‘My husband,’ says my poor wife, ‘*Lord, keep his memory of me green, and do not let me be forgotten!*’ (*Milly endeavors by signs to stop him.*)

Red. (*In a broken voice, and laying his hand upon his arm.*) Philip! I am a stricken man, on whom the hand of Providence has fallen heavily, although deservedly. You speak to me, my friend, of what I cannot follow; my memory is gone.

Phil. Merciful Power!

Red. I have lost my memory of sorrow, wrong and trouble, and with that have lost all that man would remember.

Phil. (*Wheeling his great chair L. c. for Redlaw.*) Oh, Mr. Redlaw, all that is most precious to me in my old age are such recollections of the past.

Enter Waif R., runs to Milly.

Waif. Here’s the man, in the other room. I don’t want him.

Wm. What man does he mean?

Milly. Hush! (*Makes signs for William and Philip to withdraw—they exeunt door L. C.*)

Red. Come here, my poor unfortunate. (*Beckons for him.*)

Waif. (*Holding to Milly's skirt.*) I like the woman best.

Red. You are right. (*With compassion.*) But you needn't fear to come to me. I am gentler than I was, of all the world to you, poor child! (*The waif, urged by Milly, sits at Redlaw's feet, who lays his hand upon the boy's shoulder, and extends the other to Milly, who kneels at his side so that she can look into his face.*)

Milly. Mr. Redlaw, may I speak to you?

Red. Yes. (*Fixing his eyes upon her.*) Your voice and music are the same to me.

Milly. May I ask you something?

Red. What you will.

Milly. Do you remember what I said when I knocked at your door, last night? About one who was your friend once, and who stood on the verge of destruction?

Red. Yes, I—I remember. (*Smooths the boy's hair, and looks at her fixedly.*)

Milly. This person I found soon afterward. I went back to the house, and, with Heaven's help, traced him. I was not too soon. A very little, and I should have been too late. He is the father of Mr. Edmund, the young gentleman we saw just now. His real name is Longford. You recollect the name?

Red. I recollect the name.

Milly. And the man?

Red. No, not the man. Did he ever wrong me?

Milly. Yes.

Red. Ah! Then it's hopeless—hopeless.

Milly. I did not go to Mr. Edmund last night. You

will listen to me just the same as if you did remember all?

Red. To every syllable you say.

Milly. Because I did not know, then, that the man was really his father. Since I have known who this person is, I have not gone either; but that is for another reason. He has long been separated from his wife and son—has been a stranger to his home almost from this son's infancy, I learn from him—and has abandoned and deserted what he should have held most dear. In all that time he has been falling from the state of a gentleman, more and more, until—(*Rises hastily and going off R., returns with Longford.*) he has become the total wreck you behold.

Red. Do you know me?

Long. I should be glad—and that is an unwonted word for me to use—if I could answer no.

Milly. (*Resuming her position, stretching her arm toward Longford, without looking from Redlaw's face, who regards her attentively.*) See how low he is sunk, how lost he is! If you could remember all that is connected with him, do you not think it would move your pity to reflect that one you ever loved should come to this?

Red. (*His eyes wander to Longford, but come back to her, on whom he gazes intently.*) I hope it would. I believe it would.

Milly. I have no learning, and you have much; I am not used to think, and you are always thinking. May I tell you why it seems to me a good thing for us to remember wrong that has been done us?

Red. Yes.

Milly. That we may forgive it.

Red. Pardon me, great Heaven! for having thrown away thine own high attribute!

Milly. And if your memory should one day be restored, as we all hope and pray it may be, would it not be a blessing to recall at once a wrong and its forgiveness? He cannot go to his abandoned home. He does not seek to go there. He knows that he could only carry shame and trouble to those he has so cruelly neglected, and that the best reparation he can make them now is to avoid them. A very little money, carefully bestowed, would remove him to some distant place, where he might live and do no wrong, and make such atonement as is left within his power for the wrong he has done. To the unfortunate lady who is his wife, and to his son, this would be the best and kindest boon that their best friend could give them—one, too, that they need never know of; and to him, shattered in reputation, mind and body, it might be salvation.

Red. (*Taking her head between his hands and kissing her brow.*) It shall be done. I trust to you to do it for me, now and secretly; and to tell him that I would forgive him, if I was so happy as to know for what.

Long. (*Advancing a step without raising his eyes.*) You are so generous—you ever were—that you will try to banish your rising sense of retribution in the spectacle that is before you. I do not try to banish it from myself, Redlaw. I am too decayed a wretch to make professions; I recollect my own career too well to array any such before you. But from the day on which I made my first step downward, in dealing falsely by you, I have gone down with a certain, steady, doomed progression. I might have been another man, my life might have been another life, if I had avoided that first fatal step. I speak like a man taken from the grave. I should have made my own grave last night had it not been for this blessed hand.

Milly. (*In an undertone*) Oh, dear, he likes me, too!

Long. I could not have put myself in your way, last night, even for bread. But to-day, my recollection of what has been is so strongly stirred, that I have dared to come at her suggestion, and to take your bounty, and to thank you for it, and to beg you, Redlaw, in your dying hour, to be as merciful to me in your thoughts as you are in your deeds. (*Turns toward the door and stops.*) I hope my son may interest you for his mother's sake. I hope he may deserve to do so. Unless my life should be preserved a long time, and I should know that I have not misused your aid, I shall never look upon him more. (*Raises his eyes to Redlaw, who dreamily extends his hand. Longford returns, touches it with both his own, and with head bowed down, exits slowly R. Redlaw covers his face with his hands; Milly proceeds to put some warm clothing on the boy.*)

Enter William and Philip door in flat.

Wm. (*Pointing to Milly.*) That's exactly where it is. That's what I always say, father. There's a motherly feeling in Mrs. William's breast that must and will have went!

Phil. Ay, ay; you're right. My son William's right.

Wm. (*Tenderly.*) It happens all for the best, Milly, dear, no doubt, that we have no children of our own; and yet I sometimes wish you had one to love and cherish. Our little dead child, that you built such hopes upon, has made you quiet like, Milly.

Milly. I am very happy in the recollection of it, William, dear. I think of it every day.

Wm. I was afraid you thought of it a good deal.

Milly. Don't say afraid; it is a comfort to me; it speaks to me in so many ways. The innocent thing whose stay on earth was so brief, is like an angel to me, William.

Wm. (*Softly.*) You are like an angel to father and me, I know that.

Milly. When I think of all the hopes I built upon it, and the many times I sat and gazed into the little smiling face, and sweet eyes turned up to mine, I can feel a greater tenderness, I think, for all the disappointed hopes in which there is no harm. When I see a beautiful child in its fond mother's arms, I love it all the better, thinking that my child might have been like that, and might have made my heart as proud and happy. (*Redlaw raises his head and regards her with interest.*) All through life, it seems to me, to tell me something. For poor, neglected children, my little child pleads as if it were alive, and had a voice I knew, with which to speak to me. When I hear of youth in suffering and shame, I think my child might have come to that, and that *He* who gave it, took it from me in His mercy. (*Taking William's arm and laying her head against it.*) Children love me so, that sometimes I half fancy—it's a silly fancy, William—they have some way I don't know of, of feeling for my little child, and me, and understanding why their love is precious to me. If I have been quiet since, I have been more happy, William, in a hundred ways. Not least happy, dear, in this—that even when my little child died, and I was sorrowful, and could not help grieving, the thought arose, that if I tried to lead a good life, I should meet in Heaven a bright creature, who would call me mother.

Red. (*Falling upon his knees to Milly.*) O Thou, who, through the teachings of pure love, hast graciously restored me to the memory, which was the memory of Him upon the cross, receive my thanks, and bless her! (*Embraces her and shakes hands with William and Philip.*)

Milly. (*Laughing and sobbing.*) He is come back

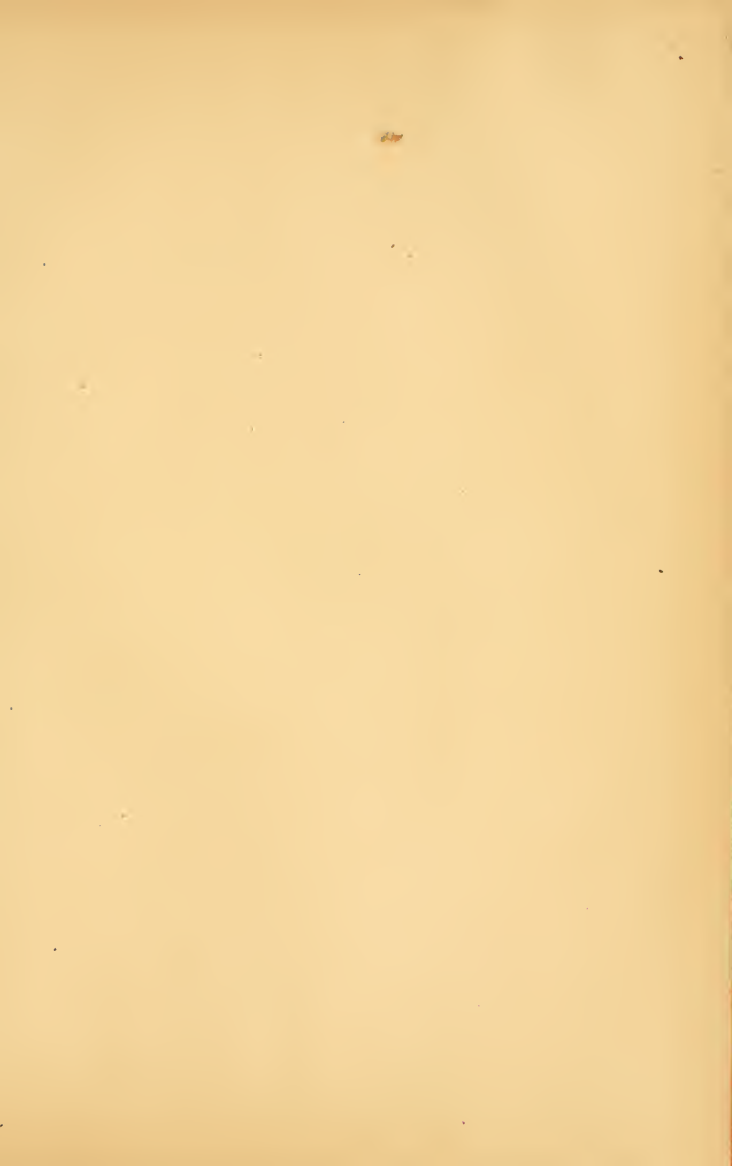
to himself! He likes me very much indeed, too! Oh, dear, dear, dear, me!

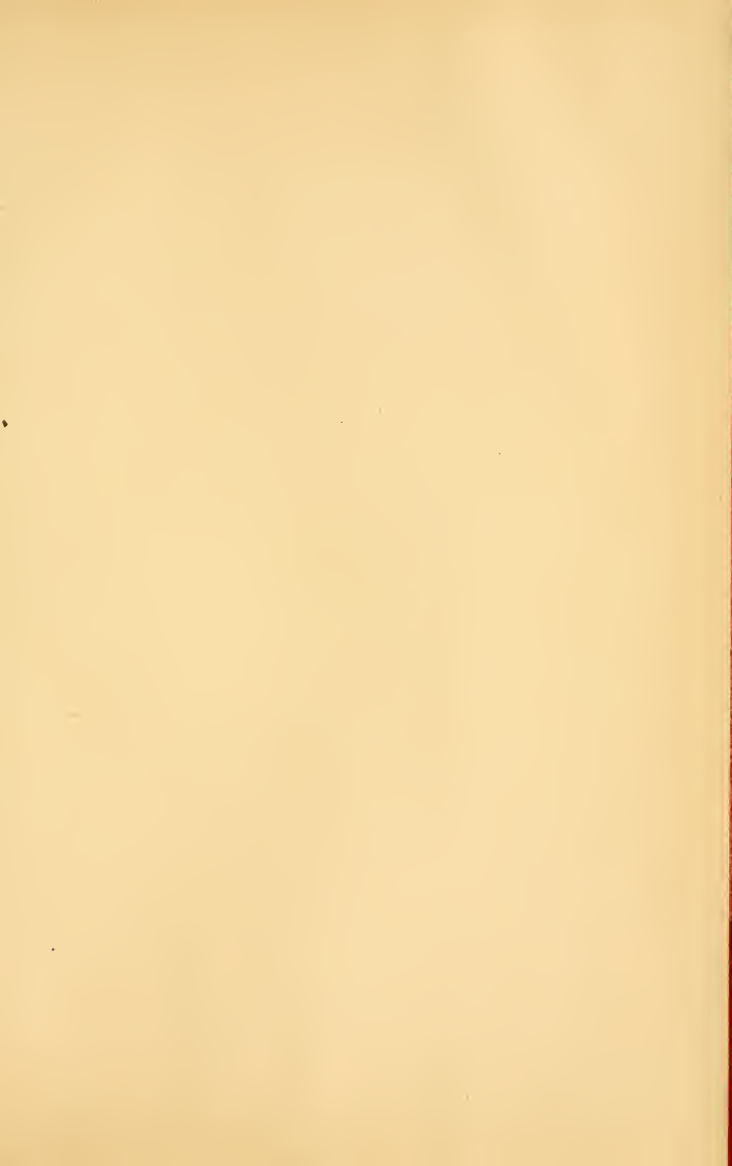
Enter Edmund Longford R., leading Alice by the hand, who seems afraid to come.

Red. Come hither, my children, you awaken softened memories of a chastened passage in my own life, to which, as to a shady tree, the peaceful dove so long imprisoned in his solitary ark might fly for rest and company; so may I find rest and love here. Henceforth be my children, and let me share your love and happiness. (*Turning to the boy, who has been better clad, and washed, by Milly, laying his hand upon his head.*) As Christmas is a time in which, of all times in the year, the memory of every remediable sorrow, wrong and trouble in the world around us should be active with us, I here pledge myself to protect, teach and reclaim this boy, and do all in my power to make him the being which his loving Creator intended. (*Giving his right hand cheerily to Philip.*) Philip, so blessed with happy memories of sorrow, wrong and trouble, we will this day hold a Christmas dinner, in what used to be, before the ten poor gentlemen commuted, their great Dinner Hall; and you will bid to it, as many of that Swidger family, whom, your son William tells me, are so numerous, that they might join hands and make a ring round England, as can be brought together on short notice. (*To audience.*) If we would realize true happiness, or promote the happiness of others, let us not forget the past, but profit by its purifying teachings, and our prayer will be that of the sedate gentleman in a peaked beard, with a ruff round his neck, 'Lord! keep my memory green!'

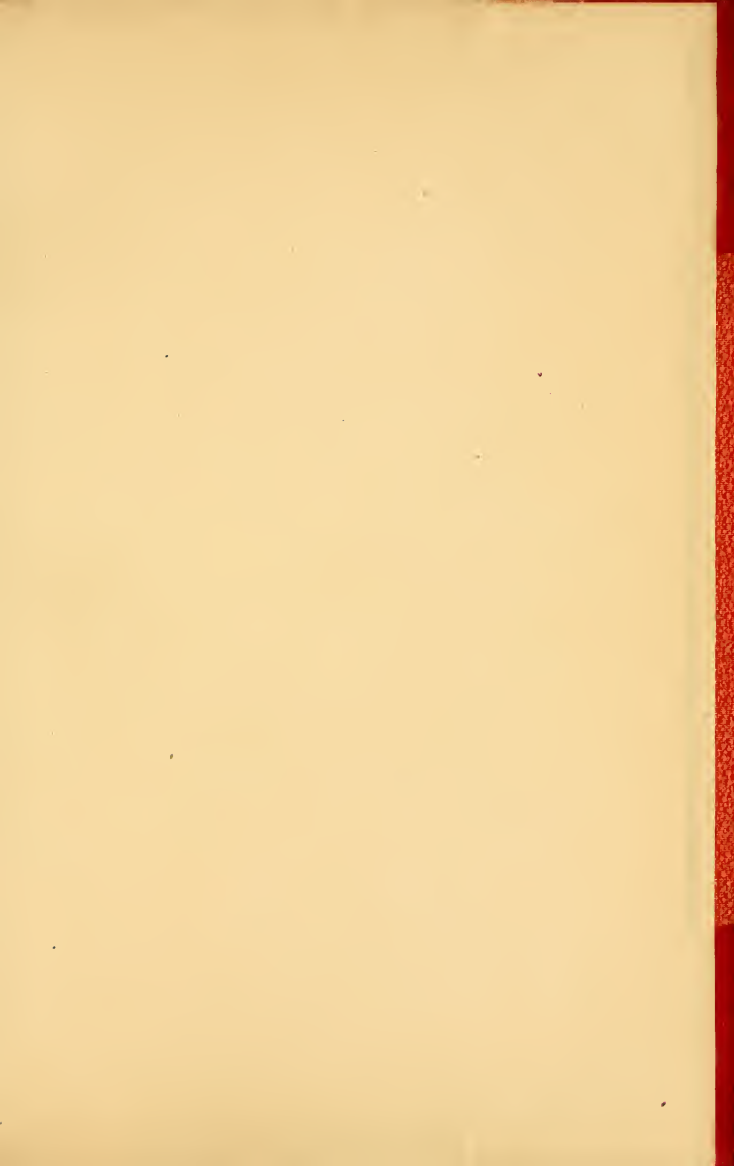
CURTAIN.











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